

ABSTRACT

The present invention includes systems and methods for decreasing the pain and discomfort commonly associated with endoscopic procedures, where such procedures may be performed with lower dosage levels of sedative and analgesic drugs. The invention includes use of an anesthetic collar coupled to an endoscope with a flexible shaft. The anesthetic collar allows lubricants, local anesthetics, dyes, and/or other desirable fluids to be passed through the existing lumen of the flexible shaft into an annulus, where the fluid may be distributed through expulsion pores into the gastrointestinal tract. Utilizing the existing lumens found in endoscopes, the present invention allows those fluids that may reduce the pain and discomfort associated with endoscopies such as, for example, local anesthetics and lubricants, to be distributed in an even fashion throughout the gastrointestinal tract or throughout the length and circumference of the endoscope, where such fluids may reduce the drug level requirements for sedative and analgesic agents. Alternatively, the endoscope may be redesigned for streamlined integration with the anesthetic collar or to accomplish the same function of distributing local anesthetics and lubricants, in an even fashion throughout the gastrointestinal tract or throughout the length and circumference of the endoscope. The invention can also be used with endoscopes without existing lumens.